

**JOURNAL OF THE PROCEEDING OF THE
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
NOVEMBER 28, 2023**

1) **Call to Order**

The Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Blue Island was called to order by Mayor Bilotto at 7:00 p.m. on November 28, 2023.

2) **Pledge of Allegiance**

3) **Roll Call**

Roll Call indicates the following:

| | | |
|---------------|---|---|
| Present: | 7 | Carr, Roll, Johnson, Montoya, Rita (7:07 pm), Fahrenwald, McGee |
| Absent: | 0 | |
| Present Also: | 5 | Raeann Cantelo-Zylman, City Clerk Jairo Frausto, Treasurer Erin Blake, City Attorney Thomas Wogan, City Administrator Mark Patoska, Deputy City Administrator |

4) **Presentation of Journal of Proceedings**

Motion by Alderman McGee, second by Alderman Fahrenwald to approve the City Council Minutes from the November 7, 2023, Regular City Council meeting.

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|-------------|---|--|
| Ayes: | 6 | Carr, Roll, Montoya, Fahrenwald, McGee |
| Nays: | 0 | |
| Absent: | 1 | Rita |
| Abstention: | 0 | |

There being six (6) Affirmative Votes, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

Motion by Alderman McGee, second by Alderman Fahrenwald to approve the City Committee of the Whole Minutes for October 11, 2023.

Ayes: 6 Carr, Roll, Montoya, Fahrenwald, McGee
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 Rita
Abstention: 0

There being six (6) Affirmative Votes, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

5) Public Comment

Allan Stevo stated we need a hospital and not a Planned Unit Development.

A resident of Blue Island stated that the City needs a hospital since the closest one is Ingalls.

6) Old Business

No old business.

7) New Business

Mr. Staniford a Zoning Attorney addressed City Council regarding Lockwood Development's application for a PUD that was presented to the PZBA. He noted that the PUD proposes developing the old hospital into senior housing, urgent care, adult day care, a limited services motel, grocer, and other medical office or business. The plan called for 44 one-bedroom flats and 172 studio apartments. The senior housing will be for persons 55 and older, and the urgent care will help those who live in the senior housing. He encouraged the City Council to tour the Aurora facility to learn more about how Lockwood Development plans to operate the PUD, if approved.

Mr. Mitch Rivera the Chief Operating Officer of the Aurora facility discussed that facility and answered the Aldermen's questions regarding the same.

Alderman Johnson inquired about the availability of kitchens for dinner preparation. According to Mr. Rivera, independent living has full kitchens but only receives one meal per day, but assisted living does not have a full kitchen because they receive three meals each day.

Alderman McGee asked about the facilities. Mr. Rivera added that they will have a Senior Director who will supply everyone with various activities.

The Mayor inquired about the occupancy and Mr. Rivera responded that the studios are selling the fastest, at 40%, while the apartments are selling the slowest, at 25%.

8) Mayor's Report

a. Motion for Approval of Payroll for November 10, 2023, for \$413,707.63 (gross).

Motion by Alderman Carr, second by Alderman Montoya to approve Payroll for November 10, 2023 for \$413,707.63 (gross).

Ayes: 7 Carr, Roll, Johnson, Montoya, Rita, Fahrenwald,
McGee
Nays: 0
Absent: 0
Abstention: 0

There being seven (7) Affirmative Votes, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

b. Motion for Approval of Payroll for November 24, 2023, for \$436,213.17 (gross).

Motion by Alderman Roll, second by Alderman Fahrenwald to approve Payroll for November 24, 2023 for \$436,213.17 (gross).

Ayes: 7 Carr, Roll, Johnson, Montoya, Rita, Fahrenwald,
McGee
Nays: 0
Absent: 0
Abstention: 0

There being seven (7) Affirmative Votes, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

c. Motion for Approval of Accounts Payable dated November 29, 2023 for \$3,186,434.86.

Motion by Alderman McGee, second by Alderman Johnson to approve Accounts Payable for November 29, 2023, for \$3,186,434.86.

Ayes: 7 Carr, Roll, Johnson, Montoya, Rita, Fahrenwald,
McGee

Nays: 0
Absent: 0
Abstention: 0

There being seven (7) Affirmative Votes, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

d. Ordinance 2023-042: An Ordinance of the City of Blue Island, Cook County, Illinois Granting a Special Use Permitting Carlos Mendoza to Operate a Building Trades/Contractor’s Office within the UTOD District (2240 Grove Street).

Motion by Alderman Fahrenwald, second by Alderman McGee for Adoption of Ordinance No. 2023-042.

Ayes: 7 Carr, Roll, Johnson, Montoya, Rita, Fahrenwald, McGee
Nays: 0
Absent: 0
Abstention: 0

There being seven (7) Affirmative Votes, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

e. Motion to Approve Increase in Annual Business Licensure Fee.

Motion by Alderman Fahrenwald, second by Alderman Johnson to Approve Annual Business Licensure Fee of \$150.00.

Ayes: 6 Carr, Roll, Johnson, Montoya, Rita, Fahrenwald, McGee
Nays: 1 Rita
Absent: 0
Abstention: 0

There being six (6) Affirmative Votes, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

City Attorney, Erin Blake, indicated that the City's code does not specify what the City charges for a business license; but leaves it to the City Council’s discretion. Based on a review of comparable municipalities, Blue Island is charging much less for business licensure.

Alderman Fahrenwald asked if there was a set charge or if it scaled up based on the type of business. City Attorney, Erin Blake, stated the City was contemplating the same fee for all businesses.

Alderman Rita inquired if the fee applied to all businesses. City Attorney, Erin Blake, stated yes.

Alderman Fahrenwald inquired about the application process. The Mayor and City Attorney responded regarding the same.

f. Resolution 2023-040: A Resolution of the City of Blue Island, Cook County, Illinois to Authorize and Approve the Proposal for a Property Insurance Policy from Alliant Regarding Hanover Insurance.

Motion by Alderman Roll, second by Alderman Carr for Adoption of Resolution No. 2023-038.

Ayes: 7 Carr, Roll, Johnson, Montoya, Rita, Fahrenwald, McGee
Nays: 0
Absent: 0
Abstention: 0

There being seven (7) Affirmative Votes, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

g. Resolution 2023-041: A Resolution of the City of Blue Island, Cook County, Illinois Supporting the Renewal of a Class 8 Real Estate Tax Assessment Classification By VWSS Blue, LLC.

Motion by Alderman Johnson, second by Alderman McGee for Adoption of Resolution No. 2023-041.

Ayes: 4 Carr, Johnson, Montoya, Rita
Nays: 2 Fahrenwald, McGee
Absent: 0
Abstention: 1 Roll

There being four (4) Affirmative Votes, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

Alderman McGee wants VSWW to justify renewing the Class 8 and was willing to table the resolution.

City Attorney, Erin Blake, noted that VSWW had previously acquired a Class 8 and that this was a renewal application. She noted that Zach Kavis, on behalf of VWSS, was available to address any questions.

Zach Kavis stated that the property was purchased in 2020, and they VSWW was not the original benefactor of the Class 8 tax incentive; but that it was present when they purchased the property. He noted that VSWW invested \$700,000 to maintain the property since that time. But, the proposed tax increase was expected to be significant and would make it difficult for the owner to operate at low consumer costs.

Alderman Rita inquired whether this had been discussed in the Committee of the Whole. The Mayor stated yes.

Alderman Johnson inquired if there was a time constraint?

The Mayor stated it roughly cuts the company's tax in half for a set period of time before gradually increasing the tax exemption. He noted that he had similar concerns; but assured Council that over the previous 10 years, VSWW has put in a lot of effort to obtain a new roof, tuck pointing, signage, and landscaping. Furthermore, there have been no complaints received regarding this business or their property.

Alderman Roll asked regarding the period of tax exemption. Mr. Kavis remarked that this is the tenth year, and it has twelve years, with an increase beginning next year.

Alderman Roll remarked that he supports revisiting the resolution at the next meeting.

Alderman Rita stated she agreed with Alderman Johnson that we want businesses to stay in Blue Island and it is his ward. She stated she would rather take a vote instead of this property becoming vacant.

Alderman Fahrenwald expressed the same concern and questioned the deadline. He also agreed to table the resolution and requested the City implement a process for vetting Class 6/Class 8 applications.

Alderman Rita commented that she recalled a similar conversation about Maple Tree's request for a tax exemption renewal and that request was denied, which led to Maple Tree leaving Blue Island.

The Mayor stated he agreed with Alderman Fahrenwald to have an application processing checklist.

h. Mayor's Announcements/Comments.

The Mayor notified the City Council that he attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony for I-57 with the governor today. He was able to connect with all of the other mayors about their similar concerns with water breaks in Oak Lawn and Oak Forest, and he hoped to gain support from the state on the infrastructure issues.

10) City Clerk's Announcements/Reports/Comments

a. City Clerk's Announcements

City Clerk, Raeann Cantelo-Zylman, stated that the Mission Covenant Church will celebrate the Pastor's birthday on 12/3/23 at 3:30 pm.

City Clerk, Raeann Cantelo-Zylman, stated that the Blue Island Public Library is beginning a mitten tree and collecting hats for the Blue Cap pantry.

City Clerk, Raeann Cantelo-Zylman announced that St. Peter and Paul will hold a bake sale as well as a sloppy joe lunch on 12/2/23 from 11 am to 1 pm.

City Clerk, Raeann Cantelo-Zylman, advised the City Council that Pentecostal Church is holding a coat drive and that you can drop off your coat at the Blue Island Public Library.

City Clerk, Raeann Cantelo-Zylman, encouraged everyone to go to the Santa and live reindeer visit on 12/16/23 on York and Western from 12 pm to 2 pm

City Clerk, Raeann Cantelo-Zylman, invited everyone to the New Year's Eve Ball Drop in front of the Lyric Theater on December 31, 2013. There will be music and fireworks.

City Clerk, Raeann Cantelo-Zylman, invited everyone to the Christmas in Blue Island Light Parade and Kringle Mart on 12/2/23. The Kringle Mart will open at 2 pm, the Mayor will light the tree at 4:30 pm, the light parade will begin at 5:30 pm, and pictures with Santa will be available immediately following the light parade.

11) Treasurer's Report

a. City Treasurer's Announcements/Comments

No comment.

12) City Attorney's Report

a. Attorney's Announcements/Comments

No comment.

13) City Administrator's Announcements/Reports/Comments

a. Tax Levy Announcement: The City will be passing its tax levy at the December 12, 2023 meeting. The levy will NOT exceed 5%.

b. City Administrator's Announcements/Comments

City Administrator, Thomas Wogan, indicated that the Illinois Funds Account, which houses tax revenue, had a formality issue. The principal authority for the Illinois Funds account has not been updated since the previous administration. Therefore, the City would like to update the principal authority on the Illinois Funds Accounts to be Deputy City Administrator Mark Patoska.

City Administrator, Thomas Wogan, notified the City Council that the budget has been amended and would be completed by the end of November.

City Administrator, Thomas Wogan, announced that the City will not require a tax anticipation loan for the third year in a row.

City Administrator, Thomas Wogan, noted that the administration is working on appropriations with staff and department leaders.

City Administrator, Thomas Wogan, advised the City Council that they would be receiving an email from Mark Patoska regarding completing the Sexual Harassment Prevention Training, and that everyone must comply.

City Administrator, Thomas Wogan, noted that revisions to the statement of economic interest are required, and the City Attorney, Erin Blake, and he will be able to assist with this process, if needed.

City Administrator, Thomas Wogan, suggested that City Council work with him to arrange for a group visit to the facility in Aurora to look at what Lockwood Development is suggesting.

14) Aldermanic Announcements/Reports/Comments

Alderman Rita stated it was nice to see all of the Dwight D. Eisenhower High School students at the City Council meeting.

Alderman Roll remarked that he would like to see the application process for tax exemption formalized, as well as an economic development strategy, in order to better examine what makes financial sense and whether or not it is good for the community.

Alderman Johnson stated he's working with the John D. Rita Recreation Center to put out a plan for kids to have fun and play basketball.

Alderman Fahrenwald indicated that he supported the economic development plan and agreed with Thomas Wogan that the chances of the hospital reopening are slim.

- 15) **Adjourn to Executive Session** pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) to discuss litigation that has been filed and is pending before a court or an administrative tribunal and actions of probable or imminent litigation.

Motion by Alderman Rita, second by Alderman Johnson to enter Executive Session.

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|-------------|---|---|
| Ayes: | 7 | Carr, Roll, Johnson, Montoya, Rita, Fahrenwald, McGee |
| Nays: | 0 | |
| Absent: | 0 | |
| Abstention: | 0 | |

There being seven (7) Affirmative Votes, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

Motion by Alderman Johnson, second by Alderman Fahrenwald to Reconvene.

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| Ayes: | 7 | Carr, Roll, Johnson, Montoya, Rita, Fahrenwald, McGee |
| Nays: | 0 | |
| Absent: | 0 | |
| Abstention: | 0 | |

There being seven (7) Affirmative Votes, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

The Mayor stated possible litigation was discussed.

- 16) **Motion for Adjournment**

Motion by Alderman Fahrenwald, second by Alderman Roll to adjourn the regular meeting.

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| Ayes: | 7 | Carr, Roll, Johnson, Montoya, Rita, Fahrenwald, |
|-------|---|---|

McGee

Nays: 0

Absent: 0


Abstention: 0

There being seven (7) Affirmative Votes, the Mayor declared the motion carried.

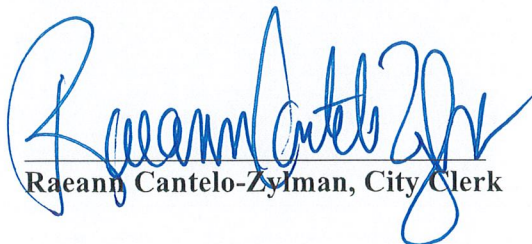
The Mayor reminded everyone that there was just one more meeting for the year.

The meeting was adjourned 8:15 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the City Council is scheduled December 12, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.


Fred Bilotto, Mayor

**APPROVED BY ME THIS
12th DAY OF DECEMBER, 2023**


Raeann Cantelo-Zylman, City Clerk